

Design and Discipline in CIA Buildings

We are fortunate in having a headquarters building and campus that are among the most attractive of all federal establishments. Several of our other buildings also are highly attractive.

One thing many of our buildings have in common is the use of clean uncluttered lines accented by solid complementary colors. This basic concept should not be altered indiscriminantly.

In general, we have been more successful in preserving and enhancing the design of our public spaces -- such as the first floor quadrangle at headquarters -- than for private offices. One reason is that public spaces are more readily subject to an overall discipline.


Order is the key to design. Lack of visual order in our offices -- the result of overcrowding or our inability to establish and maintain standards of order -- can lead to discomfort, a sense of frustration, or even depression.

Disorder will grow insidiously if we are not on guard. We need occasionally to stop and take a hard look at our work areas. We should question whether infrequently used furniture or excess supplies might better be exchanged for more breathing room. Moreover, visual overcrowding may have developed from

display of too many items on desks and walls. Personalization of work areas is desirable, but restraint is required. Avoid clutter. It can destroy the effects of good design.

Beyond the maintenance of environmental discipline, there is much more that can be done. Innovative ideas are encouraged. Be forewarned that proposals for major changes will be closely scrutinized and that funds are limited. Nonetheless, some offices have effected radical changes that enhanced and enlivened work spaces. If you're not completely satisfied with your surroundings, think CHANGE!

The attached guidelines will facilitate the efforts of concerned employees -- coordinated by their own office-level Environmental Committees -- to make their working areas more attractive.


Chairman
Fine Arts Commission

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Attachments

TIPS FOR CREATING A BETTER
HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Housekeeping

Conserve valuable space by keeping only minimum stocks of essential supplies in your office. Additional supplies are readily available in the central Supply Room (GJ26), which is open daily from 8am to 1pm.

Carton containers from copier chemicals and paper should be disposed of promptly. Cabinets for such supplies are available for purchase by individual offices.

Clippings can be informative or entertaining. They are not decorative. Route clippings or post them briefly on bulletin boards. Do not affix them to walls, safes or cabinets.

Holiday decorations and a Christmas tree can really brighten a dark December. But they should not be visible for the remaining eleven months, even if packed in cartons. Store them at home or use disposable decorations.

Liquid spills, including water, may stain carpets and even tiles. Blot up all spills immediately. Water rinse and blot coffee or chemical spills.

Water from coffee pots and vases should be emptied into utility sinks, not fountains or washroom bowls.

Furniture Arrangement

Space permitting, locate large pieces near the center or far side of room, away from entry doors. Such placement improves

balance and makes them seem less heavy than when placed immediately beside an entry. In most cases, large pieces of furniture look best when parallel to walls.

In reception areas, group small chairs near entrances but away from traffic paths. In large rooms, locate like chairs together, rather than scattered between sofas and lounge chairs. Leave leg room when chairs are cornered. Conceal coffee pots or make them less obvious by placement behind the entry door, or beside a storage cabinet. Keep minimum of items atop coffee area. Use a shelf or drawer for surplus items.

Furniture Style

GSA catalogs do not show all available furniture. If you have difficulty finding matching or complementary furniture, contact your logistics officer or the Interior Design Consultant.

Picture Arranging

Clean lines are emphasized by the architecture of the headquarters building; this theme is complemented by its furnishings, and accessories. Pictures without frames or with simple metal frames usually are consonant with the architectural concept. All should have hanging devices, magnets or nails. On plaster, put scotch tape on wall before driving nail. On metal, coat back of magnet with paper or tape. These steps will help preserve walls. Fresh paint should be allowed to dry for at least one week before

attaching anything. Do not use tape hangers because they pull paint off the walls.

Over sofas and credenzas, pictures and fabrics should be hung low for ready observation by persons who are seated. In passage-ways and areas where viewers are normally standing, hangings should be higher: 30" below the ceiling is a good average height for tops of pictures. Usually, it is adviseable to avoid two picture heights in a room. Small personal items should be closely grouped to create an impression of being one item. Avoid arrangements of detailed items behind a person who interviews.

Wall hangings should be placed for aesthetic effect, not distributed on per capita basis. Place pictures where they can be seen by many without interfering with work. More pleasure can be experienced when a worker can look away to a picture, rather than being continually aware of its presence from the corner of an eye. A limited supply of wall hangings is available through LSD's Interior

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Color Selection

Black, walnut grain, and neutral light have always been standard for basic items at CIA. Color accents are provided in the form of chairs, screens, doors, and wall art. Surfaces on screens backed to the front of a desk should be neutral so as to not tire a worker, but end panels and passageway panels may be colored. Eyes of persons working at CRT terminals are often relieved of "ghost print" images by gazing occasionally at a red surface conveniently located near the work station.

Excess Furniture/Supplies

Surplus materials should never be placed in the halls for "some-one" to pick up. Excess supplies should be returned to the central supply room. (At headquarters, GJ26). Call your administrative staff to arrange removal of surplus furniture or equipment.

Litter

Litter is a major eyesore throughout our buildings and grounds. Discourage the thoughtless discard of waste by promoting environmental awareness and admonishing offenders, or show your own concern by picking up after the litterbugs.

Who Can Help with Problems Relating to Work Environment

Line of Authority

General Services Administration (GSA)

GSA owns/leases our buildings and is responsible for their upkeep. GSA supervises our cleaning and maintenance personnel, and lets contracts for road repairs, maintenance of grounds, etc.

Logistics Services Division (LSD)

LSD is CIA's liaison with GSA. LSD coordinates all CIA space requirements, presents them to GSA and follows up on implementation.

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Call with any problem relating to building maintenance.

Administrative Staffs

Your administrative staff is the command channel to LSD for space requirements. It is also your primary contact for advice and assistance with environmental problems.

Advisory Functions

The Fine Arts Commission (FAC)

The FAC advises the Director of Logistics in matters pertaining to the aesthetics of agency buildings and grounds.

The FAC advises on the decoration of public spaces, assists in selecting items for public display and organizes periodic exhibits. The FAC encourages the formation of Environmental Committees and welcomes suggestions from them. The Chairman

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of the FAC, [] may be reached on []

Environmental Committees (ECs)

An EC normally represents an Office, Division, or building, but may speak for smaller groups with unique environmental situations.

They are composed of concerned employees who have joined efforts for the enhancement of their working environment. ECs have been particularly helpful in stimulating environmental awareness, making offices more efficient and attractive by redecorating, rearranging, reducing noise and promoting good housekeeping practices.

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LSD employees an Interior Design Consultant, []

[] who can advise on matters pertaining to office enhancement. She can be reached on []

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You

If you perceive flaws in your environment or have ideas for improving it, speak up!